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FIVE INDICTED IN SCHEME TO DEFRAUD PUBLIC ASSISTANCE AGENCIES

SACRAMENTO--United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that a federal grand jury in Sacramento returned an indictment charging MOHAMMED OMAR ZIYARMAL, 44; MARWA ZIYARMAL, 37; SHAMSHAD ZIYARMAL, 20; MOHAMMED SALIM KAZEMI, 46; and SWEEDA KAZEMI, 32, with multiple counts of mail fraud, false statements, and money laundering. The ZIYARMAL defendants are from Elk Grove, California, and the KAZEMI defendants are from Fremont, California.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the U.S. Secret Service, the Social Security Administration, the Sacramento Department of Health and Human Services, and the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency.

According to Assistant U.S. Attorney James P. Arguelles, who is prosecuting the case, the indictment alleges that, during the period of April of 1999 through the present, MOHAMMED and MARWA ZIYARMAL fraudulently obtained over \$120,000 in public assistance from the Social Security Administration, the Sacramento Department of Health and Human Services, and the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. The indictment alleges that the ZIYARMALs failed to disclose other sources of income under their control, in order to continue to receive benefits to which they would not otherwise be entitled. In addition, the indictment alleges that SHAMSHAD ZIYARMAL was assisted by MOHAMMED and SWEEDA KAZEMI in connection with his fraudulent purchases of two Elk Grove residences. Specifically, the indictment alleges that SHAMSHAD ZIYARMAL, MOHAMMED KAZEMI, and SWEEDA KAZEMI submitted false and fraudulent documentation to the lender in order to allow SHAMSHAD ZIYARMAL to qualify for mortgage loans to which he would not otherwise be entitled.

If convicted, the defendants each face a maximum sentence of twenty years in prison and up to a \$250,000 fine for each count of mail fraud which is charged, and a maximum sentence of twenty years in prison and up to a \$500,000 fine for the money laundering charges.

The charges in the indictment are only allegations, and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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